

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (Previously Presented) A multi-piece solid golf ball comprising a core consisting of a center and an intermediate layer formed on the center, and at least one layer of a cover covering the core, wherein

the center has a central point hardness in Shore D hardness of 20 to 40 and a surface hardness in Shore D hardness of 32 to 53,

the intermediate layer has a thickness of 0.3 to 2.5 mm and a hardness in Shore D hardness of 50 to 75 and a flexural modulus of 70 to 160 MPa,

the outermost layer of the cover has a flexural modulus of 180 to 280 MPa,

the golf ball has a deformation amount when applying from an initial load of 98 N to a final load of 1275 N of 3.0 to 4.3mm,

the hardness of the intermediate layer is higher than a surface hardness in Shore D hardness of the center and a hardness in Shore D hardness of the outermost layer of the cover, and the flexural modulus of the intermediate layer is lower than that of the outermost layer of the cover, and

the intermediate layer is formed from a rubber composition comprising polybutadiene, co-crosslinking agent, organic peroxide and filler as essential components, and the co-crosslinking agent is a metal salt other than a zinc salt of  $\alpha,\beta$ -unsaturated carboxylic acid.

2. (Previously Presented) The multi-piece solid golf ball according to Claim 1, wherein the intermediate layer has a specific gravity of smaller than 1.2.

3. (Previously Presented) The multi-piece solid golf ball according to Claim 1, wherein the outermost layer of the cover has a hardness in Shore D hardness of lower than 62, and a thickness of 0.3 to 2.5 mm.

4. (Cancelled).

5. (Cancelled)
6. (Cancelled)
7. (Previously Presented) The multi-piece solid golf ball according to Claim 1, wherein the intermediate layer has a thickness of 0.4 to 2.1 mm and a hardness in Shore D hardness of 55 to 72.
8. (Previously Presented) The multi-piece solid golf ball according to Claim 1, wherein the intermediate layer has a thickness of 0.5 to 1.8 mm and a hardness in Shore D hardness of 60 to 70.
9. (Currently Amended) The multi-piece solid golf ball according to Claim 2, wherein the intermediate layer has a specific gravity of lower than 1.18 ~~and a flexural modulus of 50 to 180 MPa.~~
10. (Cancelled)
11. (Previously Presented) The multi-piece solid golf ball according to Claim 1, wherein the hardness of the intermediate layer is higher than the hardness of the outermost layer of the cover in Shore D hardness of not more than 20.
12. (Previously Presented) The multi-piece solid golf ball according to Claim 1, wherein the hardness of the intermediate layer is higher than the hardness of the outermost layer of the cover in Shore D hardness of not more than 15.

13. (Previously Presented) The multi-piece solid golf ball according to Claim 1, wherein the hardness of the intermediate layer is higher than the hardness of the outermost layer of the cover in Shore D hardness of not more than 10.

14. (Previously Presented) The multi-piece solid golf ball according to Claim 1, wherein the outermost layer of the cover has a hardness in Shore D hardness of 45 to 62.

15. (Previously Presented) The multi-piece solid golf ball according to Claim 1, wherein the flexural modulus of the intermediate layer is lower than that of the outermost layer of the cover by a difference of 5 to 150 MPa.

16. (Previously Presented) The multi-piece solid golf ball according to Claim 1, wherein the flexural modulus of the intermediate layer is lower than that of the outermost layer of the cover by a difference of 10 to 120 MPa.

17. (Previously Presented) The multi-piece solid golf ball according to claim 1, wherein the surface hardness of the center is higher than the central point hardness of the center by 12 to 16.